With New PO Coming . . .

City, DAV Showing Interest In Carbondale Post Office

By RAY RINALDI

The federal government was not interested and neither was the state nor county governments. But Carbondale and at least one veterans organization have indicated a desire to purchase the present post office building when it becomes available in late 1983.

The U.S. Postal Service, which awarded a contract for $560,000 on Dec. 28th to the Scranton-based firm of Pettinato and Mercanti for the construction of a new postal facility along Dundaff Street, went by the book in first offering its present quarters to federal, state and county governments.

Number four on the list of potential buyers is the city of Carbondale and here, the Postal Service received some interest. Brought to the attention of City Council at its last meeting, the solons instructed Acting City Administrator Joseph Masco to contact postal authorities for additional information.

"We did write to the proper authorities," Masco told The Tribune, "and did receive the information we required. I intend to bring this up at Monday's Council meeting."

Specifically, the city would be asked to make an offer for the building at North Main Street and Lincoln Avenue. If the offer is considered to be too unrealistic, the Postal Service will then have the building appraised and later put up for bid.

As Councilwoman Charlotte Moro pointed out at a public forum a week ago, the present post office building is one of the most beautiful and classically designed structures in the community.

"We have the option of obtaining the building and using it as a municipal building," said Mrs. Moro. "The idea has many positive aspects, but also several drawbacks."

Mrs. Moro pointed out that while the building is spacious and could adequately house all the offices and departments of the city, including police headquarters and jail, it would cost approximately $150,000 to convert the structure into a municipal building. Mrs. Moro added she did not know where the money would come from, but that she intended to investigate all avenues.

Waiting in the wings if the city should falter in its efforts to obtain the building is the Disabled American Veterans organization.

"We've been interested in the building for quite some time," said Cmdr. Joseph Baldwin. "Our intention, right from the beginning, was to purchase the building if at all possible, to open it up to all the veterans organizations in town. We have six separate groups with a total membership of some 700. This building would be ideal for us."

Deciding to procede even though they knew the city would be given first choice, the DAV has formed a building committee headed by Alex Bucklaw and members Baldwin, Tony Cianslone and Bob Evans.

"We still have a lot of research to do," said Bucklaw, "before we prepare a formal bid for the building, but we are very interested in doing just that.

There may be some help in paying the bills for whoever eventually winds up with the building. According to Carbondale Postmaster Gerald Barrett, the city will have a substation after the new facility is constructed.

"We promised that back in 1977," said Barrett, "and we'll make good on the promise."

The substation, according to Barrett, will, in fact, be what is called a "contract station," and will be open to bid by anyone. The size and location of the station is normally determined by the bidder but what better location for a mini post office but in the present post office theorized potential buyers.

Whoever eventually winds up with the building could easily operate the contract station, since it entails only the mailing of letters and parcels and sale of stamps. Whoever operates the station would be paid by the Postal Service.

First phase of construction of the new facility is to begin next month, if the weather holds. Completion of the building is scheduled in about one year.